

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 /021 W

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FM AMCONSUL VANCOUVER

TO USDOC WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3403

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

UNCLAS VANCOUVER 0299

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, ETRD, CA

SUBJECT: CHANGES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA WINE RETAILING POLICIES

1. CONSUMER AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS MINISTER RAFE MAIR RECENTLY ANNOUNCED SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES IN THE RETAILING AND IMPORTING POLICIES OF THE LIQUOR DISTRIBUTION BRANCH WHICH CONTROLS ALL RETAIL LIQUOR SALES IN THE PROVINCE OUTSIDE HOTELS, RESTAURANTS, BARS, ETC. THESE CHANGES SHOULD HAVE THE OVERALL EFFECT OF LOWERING PRICES ON FOREIGN WINES AND THUS RESULT IN SOME INCREASE IN SALES. THE ANNOUNCED PURPOSE OF THESE CHANGES IS TO "ENCOURAGE THE CONSUMPTION OF WINE, BOTH IMPORTED AND DOMESTIC".

2. THE MOST IMPORTANT CHANGES FROM THE STANDPOINT OF U.S.

WINES ARE:

(A) A DECREASE IN THE MARKUP ON FOREIGN WINES FROM 117 PERCENT TO 100 PERCENT. (DOMESTIC WINES MARKUP WAS DECREASED FROM 66 PERCENT TO 46 PERCENT, SO THE PRICE SPREAD BETWEEN FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC IS INCREASED.)

(B) NO NEW FOREIGN WINES UNDER DOLS 2.75/LITRE WILL BE LISTED. THIS MAKES FORMAL (WITH A SMALL ADJUSTMENT) A PREVIOUS INFORMAL POLICY OF NO LISTINGS BELOW DOLS 3.00/LITRE.

(C) PRIVATE ORDERS OF WINES HAVE BEEN RESTRICTED TO A MINIMUM PRICE OF DOLS 2.75/LITRE AND AN ADVANCE DEPOSIT OF UNCLASSIFIED

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HALF THE ORDER VALUE. MANY U.S. WINES WERE PREVIOUSLY IMPORTED UNDER THE LESS STRINGENT PAST RULES. THIS TIGHTENING MAY HURT THOSE SALES.

3. SALES GROWTH OF FOREIGN WINES HAS BEEN MUCH GREATER THAN FOR DOMESTIC WINES. DOMESTIC WINE SALES INCREASED 10 PERCENT, WHILE FOREIGN REDS INCREASED 14 PERCENT AND FOREIGN WHITES

46 PERCENT. WE EXPECT A FAIRLY LARGE LISTING OF NEW FOREIGN  
WHITES LATER IN THE YEAR AS A RESULT.  
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## Message Attributes

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